

# Our Washington Letter

One of the Ways Devised by Congress to Spend Uncle Sam's Money  
—Government Biologist Records Tones Heard in the Wildwood—  
Other News Notes from the Capital.



WASHINGTON.—If any gentleman contemplates building himself a striking sort of a home he should not construct it after the form and style of the Washington monument. Costs too much to keep it up. The secretary of the treasury has just sent to congress an estimate of the amount he will need during the next year for the upkeep of the monument and it totals \$11,820. This, of course, includes the elevator and machinery, but after all no one would care for a house 555 feet high without an elevator in it, and therefore the cost of maintaining an elevator must be considered by anyone contemplating that kind of a habitation.

The Washington monument has an elevator running up through its middle and stairs winding around the elevator shaft and between it and the walls, or skin, of the building. And it has an engine house underground not far away. It has engines, boilers and dynamos, and likewise a heating plant, including oil stoves for the elevator car and the bottom and top floors of the monument. Among the articles bought for the monument are fuel, waste, lights, oil, packing, tools, matches, paints, brushes, brooms, lanterns, rope, nails, screws and lead.

To run the thing there is a force of men consisting of one boss, down on the books as the custodian, at \$100 a month; one steam engineer, at \$80 a month; one assistant steam engineer, at \$70 a month; one foreman, at \$55 a month; one elevator conductor, at \$75 a month; one attendant on the bottom floor, at \$60 a month; one attendant on the top floor, at \$60 a month; three night and day watchmen, at \$60 a month apiece. So that with running the elevator, preventing people from committing suicide by jumping out of the windows at the top, as some fool every little while attempts to do, and keeping an eye on the property to prevent it from being stolen, the monument costs a tidy sum every year.

The watchmen, if you ask what in the world they find to do to kill time between pay days, will assure you that if they were not "Johnny on the spot" all the while, the monument would be all clipped off and carried away in a few weeks by the great American brotherhood of rubbernecks.

## GOVERNMENT EXPERT WRITES BIRDS' MUSIC.

Henry Oldys, assistant biologist in the department of agriculture, has 1,000 samples of bird music written in popular form so that it is possible for the human voice exactly to imitate the songsters of the field and the forest. He has recorded the actual tones, setting them in the proper musical key, and their reproduction is easy for anybody who can read musical symbols. Mr. Oldys has been gathering bird language for 13 years and during most of that time has been devoting his expert knowledge of the subject to official reports which find their way in the government archives. He has extended the work of other eminent naturalists and to-day is foremost among those who have made a study of this unique branch of science.

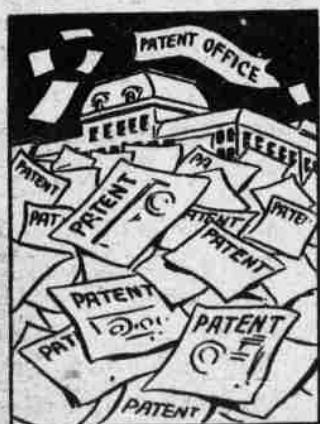
The forests of the south and the fastnesses of the west have been the handbook of this student. He has collected as far as possible all the bird notes capable of reproduction for human expression. Asked if he would formulate these in popular form he said that it probably would not be possible, as his samples are short and often disjointed. He thought the composer, however, might supplement the work of the scientist.

There is in this collection, then, the possible groundwork for a magnificent bird opera. If the blending of notes can successfully be accomplished the theater goer of the next decade may be treated with a wonderful entertainment and may hear in the course of one evening the songs of the feathered musicians of the world executed by human vocal chords.

Mr. Oldys explains that many of the bird tones are almost identical with those of the human. Taking this as a basis he has recorded the symbols whereby the human can read and the human voice express these harmonious sounds.

Among the more prevalent birds whose tones are like those of the human and can be reproduced and written as music are the wood thrush, the chickadee, the song sparrow, the field sparrow, the Baltimore oriole, the wood pewee and the Carolina wren.

## PATENT OFFICIALS DEMAND LARGER QUARTERS.



The inventive breed is not dying out in America. The commissioner of patents at Washington calls loudly for larger quarters, more clerks and bigger pay for overworked examiners. There is such a flood of new devices pouring into the patent office as was never seen before. The examiners are fairly swamped and are a full year behind in their work.

Naturally enough, motors and submarine and aerial navigating devices lead the list. Modern man insists upon flying, and the inventor who adds speed to his passing to and fro upon the earth, in the air, or in or under the water is certain of his reward.

The inventors are no believers in the early coming of peace among the nations, for improvements upon weapons and new explosives are well nigh as numerous as new motors. Yet with all this gunning for gain and racing for fame on the part of the inventors the chances are that some unconsidered trifle like the wooden ball with a rubber string or the globe catch for women's purses will win the largest rewards in the future as in the past.

## OFFICIALS RESENT SPYING BY TELEPHONE.

If they are deprived of all personal use, for whatever purpose, of the telephones in their office, why should not the private conversations held on the wire between the office of the secretary of the navy and his office and residence in Baltimore be charged up to Mr. Boneparte, is a question that has arisen in the disturbed minds of a number of chiefs of bureaus in the navy department.

Developments in the navy department have disclosed to even the highest officials that it is impossible for them to hold private conversations over the department telephones. H. C. Gauss, private secretary of Secretary Bonaparte, has taken the situation in hand and made private detectives of the "hello" girls in the department's telephone exchange. For some time the operators have been listening to every conversation possible and keeping tab of all those which according to their judgment have no bearing on business of the department.

Officials were given a surprise when they learned that an "official eavesdropper" had been appointed, particularly by the secretary's private secretary. The matter of tapping after the telephone business of the department usually falls to the chief clerk, and there is general resentment that censorship has thus been put on their conversations.

While none of the officials takes the stand that the government should be charged up with private conversations, they do bitterly resent the method that has been adopted to "spy" on them, and it is likely that the matter will be called to the attention of the secretary.



# A Toast For The New Year

Henry M. Hyde

TO THE True Pioneers of Progress—to the men with chain and sextant, drill and shield, hoist and riveter—burrowing through mountains, spinning, spiderlike, across dizzy chasms—making the world smaller and Man larger—  
A Happy New Year and Many of 'Em!

TO THE Gentleman Adventurers—to the men who tempt the vengeance of the upper air, dare the sunless dangers of deep seas, track to their secret lairs the wild beasts of disease and pestilence—risking their own lives that the life of Man may be made safe—  
A Happy New Year and Many of 'Em!

TO THE Poets and dreamers of the Present—to the men who harness the tides, bridle the west wind, put a yoke about the neck of the glaciers, drive the sun and moon tandem—making the forces of nature toil that Man may enjoy—  
A Happy New Year and Many of 'Em!

TO THE Masters of the Future—to the men who know, to the men in earnest—rejoicing in their knowledge and their strength, looking with clear eyes, unafraid, into the face of fate—crowned with the high happiness of work well done—  
A Happy New Year and Many of 'Em!

—Technical World.

## New Year's Is a Candy Day in France.

Boxes of Sweets Are Favorite Gifts with all Classes in Paris.

Once is used to be very popular to give New Year's presents; but now so much more attention is paid to Christmas, and every one receives so many lovely things then, that our American boys and girls cannot complain if they do not get presents a week later, as did their mothers and fathers.

However, if they lived in France, New Year's day would be a great occasion, especially for girls, for there every man or boy gives some gift, no matter how small, to his friends. No one paying a call would think of going empty-handed, and little French girls at school on the 2d of January count up how many presents they received, just as our girls do after Valentine's day.

A favorite gift is candy. Sometimes this candy is made into temples, churches or playhouses; or all sorts of queer forms like bundles of carpets, boots and shoes, musical instruments, gridirons, saucepans, lobsters, crabs, books and hats are made of colored sugar, hollowed out and filled inside with chocolates, mints and other bonbons that can be eaten.

Don't you think the little French children must feel pretty sick the next day, after so much sweet stuff? For, of course, they would have to sample each kind; that is, if they are like American boys and girls in their fondness for candy.

## No Chan es Needed in the Brown Family.

Proposed Resolutions Brought Emphatic Objections from Both Sides of House.

"This is the new year," said Mrs. Brown, as she and Brown sat down to dinner, "and perhaps we ought to make some little changes for 1907."

"I am willing," he replied. "Yes, I have been thinking that I would make a few changes."

"That is nice of you. You know that you swear and that I don't like it at all. It will be so sweet and kind and considerate to give it up for my sake."

"Give up swearing! Not on your life!"

"What, then, did you mean by change?"

"Why, I have been allowing you five dollars per week as pin money, and I know that you simply fool most of it away. One of the changes contemplated was to cut the sum in half."

"Samuel Brown!" exclaimed the wife, as she knocked on her plate with her fork to emphasize her words, "don't make any mistake on your wife, May. You will continue to swear as hard as you wish, and as often as you wish, and my five dollars pin money comes to me every Saturday night, or there won't be any glass left in the front windows to last over Sunday!"

## A June New Year's on the Nile Banks.

The Ancient Egyptians Started the Year with the Raise of the River.

In all ages and all lands much importance has been attached to New Year's day. In Egypt the new year fell between the 17th and the 20th of June, and was called the "night of the drop." The sacred Nile was thought to flow down from heaven, and at its lowest ebb—about the middle of June—a tear from Isis fell

into the stream and caused it to rise.

Consequently at this season the priests and people kept a sleepless vigil at the river's shore, watching for the miraculous rise which should bring such riches to the whole land. When the "night of the drop" came, the priests cleared the altars of old ashes and lighted the sacred fires for the new year.

Every one of the faithful carried a coal from the altar to light the fire at his own hearth, and from end to end the land was ablaze with light. The people put off their old garments and arrayed themselves in white, anointing their heads with sacred oil, crowning themselves with flowers and bearing palms in their hands, while chants and songs and fasting and processions filled the homes.

## Passing Humor of the New Year.

Would You Blame Him?

Mina—Did your husband, at New Year's, swear off?  
Lena—Yes, off and on—whenever a bill came in.—Town Topics.



## The Origin of New Year's Calls.

Like Many Others of Our Customs, They Were Imported from China.

The custom of making New Year's calls, which had a long run in America, and is still extant, came originally from China, where such calls are one of the main features of the brilliant and lengthy New Year's celebration.

Every Chinaman pays a visit to each of his superiors, and receives one from each of his inferiors. Images of gods are carried in procession to the beating of a deafening gong, and mandarins go by hundreds to the emperor and that apparently much-maligned sovereign, the empress dowager, with congratulatory addresses. Their robes are gorgeously embroidered, and are heavy with gold. The younger people call upon the elder.

Children call upon their parents. Pupils pay their respects to their teachers. A light collation is offered every visitor, but it is to be noted, no wine is served. Tea takes the place of any stronger drink.

# MISSOURI STATE NEWS

## State a Third Prohibition.

There are 37 Missouri counties where, upon vote of the people, the majority have declared against the saloon. This is more than one-third of the entire state. With seven exceptions, every Missouri county that has in the present year voted upon the question of local option, has declared for prohibition. Nine prohibition counties are north of the Missouri river, while the others are in the extreme south. The liquor counties are along the Missouri river. One might cross the state of Missouri from Kansas to Tennessee and not put foot in a county where there are saloons. He would be compelled to keep close to the Arkansas line to do so however. There are 4,642 saloons licensed in Missouri. Of these 2,588 are in St. Louis, 600 in Kansas City and 183 in St. Joseph, leaving only 1,271 for the state outside the three cities. In counties which have permitted saloons, the tendency is for higher license and fewer saloons.

## May Sue National Banks.

Stephen J. Chitwood, collector of Jasper county, served notice on the national banks of that county that unless they paid their personal taxes on or before the date for closing the December taxbooks, suit would be brought to enforce collection. The question between the stockholders of the national institutions and the county collector is whether the collector may take into consideration the surplus of the banks in basing his tax assessment. Under the national banking law this is forbidden, but the county officers claim they cannot equitably assess the above par stock of the institutions unless the surplus earnings are considered. The question is an annual bone of contention here and has generally been settled out of court.

## A Bill to Pension Teachers.

John L. Lobb of Independence, the father of the bill to pension Missouri teachers, is not discouraged by the fact that his bill at the last two sessions of the state legislature failed to get through the committee room. He says he will send it back again this winter, and expects to have better success. He will place it in the hands of A. L. Cooper, state senator-elect from his district. The measure provides that when a white teacher who has taught not fewer than 15 years in the state shall become incapacitated, either mentally or physically, a pension shall be granted by the state of not less than \$10 nor more than \$15 a month, the pension to cease if the teacher recovers from such disability.

## Burned to Death in a Car.

J. S. Gilliland and an unknown man were burned to death in a car in the Rock Island yards at St. Joseph. Gilliland was moving from Northboro, Ia., to Marlin, I. T. An oil stove in the car was tipped over and set the household goods on fire, roasting the men alive.

## Changes in a St. Joseph Bank.

Walter P. Fulkerson, formerly national bank examiner with headquarters in Carthage has been elected president of the First National bank of Buchanan county to succeed Jacob M. Ford, who desired to retire on account of advanced age.

## Elk Killed in the Ozarks.

The body of the first elk killed in the Ozarks in 50 years was brought to Springfield recently. The animal was slain on Colonel Moses C. Wetmore's game preserve. It weighed 400 pounds. The antlers will be sent to W. J. Bryan.

## Another Chillicothe Bond Election.

Following the action of the supreme court declaring illegal Chillicothe's \$100,000 in bonds for a municipal waterworks and electric light plant, the city council held a special meeting recently at which the city attorney was instructed to prepare an ordinance for another similar election along the lines laid down by the court. The city already has collected several thousand dollars in taxes to pay interest and principal on the invalidated bonds and the council ordered this refunded to the taxpayers.

## Fulton's Asylum Examined.

The Missouri legislature junketing committee visited the school for the deaf and the hospital for the insane at Fulton recently. They examined into the management of affairs of these two institutions and reported them to be in first class condition. The managers of the school for the deaf have asked for \$300,000 and the hospital for the insane for \$100,000, for the next biennial period.